

# THE MEDICAL AND SURGICAL REPORTER.

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## ORIGINAL DEPARTMENT.

### MEDICAL SOCIETIES.

#### MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA—TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL SESSION.

(Continued from No. 955.)

Dr. Pepper next dwelt upon the new means of observation and diagnosis, as ophthalmoscopy, and thermometry, and exhibited and explained the best thermometers now in use. Under improvements in therapeutics, he alluded to the modes of action of remedies. The improvement in this respect is due to the increase of knowledge of physiology, and of the methods of research, and especially to the application to the study of each drug, of conjoined experimental and clinical investigation. Thus digitalis is now shown, in moderate doses, to be a decided stimulus to the muscular power of the heart, with the power to promote contraction of the arterioles and increase the arterial pressure. Hence, it is now employed more intelligently, definitely and fearlessly, not only in cardiac disease, but in many affections characterized by enfeebling of the muscular motor power of the heart, and relaxation of the terminal vessels. There is an equal gain in our knowledge in regard to quinia, belladonna, bromide of potassium, etc.

New agents, and of high value, have been introduced. Nitrite of amyl produces almost instantaneous dilatation of the capillaries, and hence its success in convulsions dependent upon spasm of the minute vessels of the brain, and in cases of vascular spasm, as angina pectoris. The inhalation of two to three drops checks the development of convulsions in epilepsy, with an aura, giving time for its use, and also in puerperal eclampsia, while in angina pectoris the paroxysms of pain are not only generally arrested, but in a fair proportion of cases their occurrence has been modified or checked.

The hypodermic method of medication also has been a great improvement. The most re-

markable development in this direction has been with ergot. The peculiar power of this remedy, and its quick and powerful action, when used hypodermically, naturally lead to its employment in many different conditions, as in uterine fibroids, in the treatment of aneurisms, where it is injected over the seat of the affection; in splenic tumors, in hæmoptysis, in which it is a most reliable astringent; and in certain forms of congestive neuralgia. In the latter affection, it is best injected over the track of the affected nerve.

The systematic use of water in form of baths, or external applications, has been recently more fully studied. Hydrostatic injections merely require a funnel, with a flexible tube, six or eight feet long, attached. The funnel is raised to the required height, and with proper care, the pressure of the column of water may be employed to overcome intestinal obstructions. This method has positive advantages over the aspirator or the Bowditch syringe. In cases of intestinal obstruction, the operation of abdominal section has been employed, and with marked success.

In pleuritic effusions, paracentesis has been employed, and has attained great popularity. He exhibited the forms of apparatus, and the best mode, by means of the bottle aspirator, thus showing a continuous operation, without the escape of offensive odors into the apartment. The very ready means for this operation have, no doubt, led to its premature performance, or even in cases not appropriate. He would favor it in acute pleurisy, when the effusion has been very rapid, so that the symptoms of interference with the lungs and heart are threatening to life. Here a capillary puncture should be made, and some of the fluid very slowly and continuously drawn off.

In acute pleurisy, when the effusion has become excessive, so as to distend the pleura, with marked enlargement and bulging, displacing the heart, and other viscera, with extreme dyspnoea or disturbed cardiac action, sudden death may result from a neglect of this opera-

tion. When the symptoms are not threatening, but absorption fails to occur under careful treatment, the operation should be performed, to lessen the chances of suppuration occurring, and converting the case into one of empyema; in subacute pleurisy, of any kind, with dangerous distention; in mechanical pleural effusions with such symptoms; in all cases where the symptoms or the use of the exploring needle show the purulent character of the effusion; in hydro-pneumothorax, with extreme disturbance of respiration and circulation.

In ordinary acute pleurisy the operation is not indicated, nor in latent or mechanical hydrothorax, unless the above indications occur.

He had lately suggested and used intra-pulmonary injections, with very delicate needles, into superficial pulmonary cavities or localized areas of consolidation. The injection consisted of small quantities of dilute solution of iodine or carbolic acid. He was sure there was no danger in the treatment for hemorrhage, pleurisy, or irritation of lung tissue.

The results are negative in all cases of tubercles, and in acute caseous infiltration of the lung. In subacute local consolidations it seems probable that this may favor resolution. In chronic superficial cavity, without tendency to destruction, repeated injections may be favorable, lessen discharge, and favor cicatrization. These should not be repeated oftener than once in six or seven days: iodine, say liq. iodine, c., one part to ten of warm water, injected, say, ten to forty-five minims, seems most favorable.

There are two vexed questions which must be mentioned; Venesection and transfusion. For the last, we require information on the following points:—the character of the fluid to be injected, the quantity, the manner, and the conditions calling for the operation. It does not seem to matter whether the human blood is injected directly as it emerges from the veins of the donor, or after defibrination. The risk of the formation of coagula can be entirely overcome by care, and the slight disadvantage of the loss of a small proportion of red globules is more than counterbalanced by the greater certainty as to the quantity and rate of speed of injection and greater ease of operation. It is probable that the use of other animal blood lessens the advantages and adds to the risk. When the heart and lungs are sound, five or six ounces may be injected, but in chronic diseases it should never exceed two or three ounces. The blood should enter at a very slow rate, a few drachms a minute. Perhaps it would be better to inject into one of the smaller arteries, instead of a vein. The apparatus depends upon the mode. Aveling's is best for the direct; for defibrinated blood, the apparatus as elaborated by Dr. C. T. Hunter, of Philadelphia, is best. Great care should be observed to avoid the introduction of air or minute coagula, and there should be great deliberation in the operation.

The great question is as to the clinical value of the operation, and the indications for it. In intense acute anæmia from profuse hemorrhage,

it has saved life; but such cases are rare. It is to be hoped that the field will widen, and that it may be applied to cases of tuberculosis, scrofula, pyæmia, leucocythæmia, etc.

As to venesection, it suffices to say that our attention has been again called to this subject by men of the most commanding influence, both at home and abroad, and from them it will receive the close study and consideration it demands.

On motion, the thanks of the Society were given for this able and appropriate address, and it was referred to the Committee of Publication.

On motion, the following gentlemen were invited to seats with the Society: Drs. C. L. Bard, of California; R. Leonard, of Carbon County; J. Bushong and J. Z. Grove, of Lancaster County.

Dr. R. J. Levis, of Philadelphia, then read the Address in Surgery.

He chose a practical subject of general interest, and specially considered fractures of the lower end of the radius. He alluded to the usual result of deformity, painfulness, defective innervation, and impairment of the utility of the limb, which follows the ordinary treatment, and which he believes is less efficient than that of any other ordinary fracture of long bones. All cabinet specimens, in both the museums of this country and of Europe, show more or less deformity of union. Such fractures have much uniformity of location at between a quarter and three-quarters of an inch above the carpal articulation, measured from the posterior articular edge of the bone. They generally appear to be higher than they really are, and Colles, of Dublin, was in error in locating them at an inch and a half from the end of the radius, as has been shown by more recent practical observations and dissections, and the examination of numerous specimens. Fractures higher than two inches above the joint present very different deformity, and have not the same surgical importance.

The observations of Barton, in regard to a form of fracture which consisted, as he thought, in the chipping off of the posterior edge of the articular surface, and attended with posterior dislocation of the carpus, have not been verified, and neither dissection of recent fractures nor examination of pathological specimens will confirm his views. If the fracture, as detailed by Barton, ever occurs, it must be very rare, and Dr. Levis believes that Barton mistook for it the usual transverse fracture very near to the joint.

The reasons why the bone breaks within an inch of its carpal end, are found in the facts that its compact tissue ceases there, and it is expanded into loose cancellated tissue; there is also a loss of its cylindrical form, and there exists a curvature, with its concavity forward, which allows the force to be spent on the inside of an arch, which inclines to break at its middle. The force which produces the fracture is not, as is usually taught, in the long axis of the bone, but rather an action of leverage of the extreme forcible extension of the hand and

wrist, acting against the curve on the anterior side of the lower end of the radius.

In the treatment of the injury, Dr. Levis does not approve of attempting to overcome the deformity of eversion of the hand by forcible inversion on the pistol-shaped splint. The splint of Bond is advised when the deformity is not great and can be readily overcome, and the apposition so maintained. In very many cases the deformity cannot be overcome without extension in the direction of the long axis of the bone, and Dr. Levis exhibited and illustrated a new and efficient method of accomplishing such treatment.

On motion, the address was referred to the Committee of Publication.

Dr. Benjamin Lee, of Philadelphia, then delivered the address in Hygiene.

(An abstract of this address will appear in our next issue).

He offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:—

*Resolved*, That the Committee on Hygiene be, and is hereby, authorized to draw on the Secretary for copies of the Transactions for the year during which he holds his appointment, and to distribute the same to State Boards of Health, Boards of Health of large cities, the American Public Health Association, and other important sanitary bodies in this country and in Europe, with the request that they will furnish this Society their own Transactions in exchange.

On motion of Dr. J. L. Atlee, of Lancaster, the thanks of the Society were tendered Dr. Lee for his able and interesting paper, and it was referred to the Committee of Publication.

On motion of Dr. W. B. Atkinson, of Philadelphia, the following was adopted:—

*Whereas*, At the session of the American Medical Association at Louisville, the following resolution was adopted:—

*Resolved*, That each year, until otherwise ordered, the President elect and the Permanent Secretary be directed to appeal, in the name of the Association, to the authorities of each State where no State Board of Health exists, urging them to establish such boards, and

*Whereas*, State Boards of Health now exist in Massachusetts, California, Georgia, Rhode Island, Iowa and Michigan, and have fully shown their importance and value; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the State Medical Society do urge upon our State Legislature the importance and necessity of appointing such a Board for this State.

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed, to memorialize our State Legislature, and to take whatever steps may be necessary in the matter.

The president appointed as the committee, Drs. Atkinson and Lee, of Philadelphia, and H. L. Orth, of Harrisburg.

On motion, the address of Dr. Curwen, in Mental Diseases, was made the first order of business for the afternoon session.

Dr. R. L. Sibbet, of Carlisle presented the

report of the Committee on Medical Legislation, showing the value of the law passed by the last Legislature.

On motion of Dr. Turnbull, Philadelphia, the committee were cordially thanked for their action, the report was received and the committee was continued.

Dr. J. G. Stetler, Philadelphia, offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:—

*Whereas*, This Society has retained the late Dr. D. F. Condie on its roll of permanent members, the loss of membership from the Philadelphia County Medical Society, by virtue of removal, to the contrary notwithstanding, therefore,

*Resolved*, That the President appoint Dr. Nebinger to draft appropriate resolutions of condolence, to be presented at this meeting.

On motion of Dr. Atkinson, the following was adopted:—

*Whereas*, a large number of volumes of Transactions have accumulated in the hands of the Secretary, therefore be it

*Resolved*, that the Committee of Publication have full discretionary power to use the remaining copies of the Transactions for the best interests of this Society.

Dr. P. J. Roebuck, of Lancaster, offered the following:—

*Whereas*, The Legislature of Pennsylvania has, in its wisdom, enacted a general law to protect the people against incompetent practitioners of medicine, surgery and obstetrics, and

*Whereas*, Communities do not generally comprehend the extent of injury to life and health inflicted upon them by incompetent practitioners, and

*Whereas*, Laws are of no avail unless enforced, therefore

*Resolved*, That the members of the State Medical, and various local Societies, to protect the life and health of the people against empiricism, should make a determinate effort to enforce the law passed last winter, entitled "An act to Regulate the Practice of Medicine, Surgery and Obstetrics in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

On motion of Dr. J. L. Atlee, it was amended to read that this be referred to each county society, with the request that they will appoint committees to see that this law is enforced.

The preamble and resolution as amended were then discussed by Drs. Roebuck, Sibbet, and E. A. Wood, of Pittsburg, and pending its adoption, the Society adjourned until afternoon.

#### THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

The President called the Society to order at 2½ p. m. The Permanent Secretary read the following note from Prof. S. D. Gross, which was ordered to be entered on the minutes.

PHILADELPHIA, June 9th, 1875.

To the President of the Pennsylvania State Medical Society—

DEAR SIR:—I regret that urgent engagements will prevent my attendance during the present



meeting of the Society. Do me the favor to tender my cordial sympathy to the Society in all its movements tending to elevate the character of the profession; and believe me to be, very truly, your friend, S. D. GROSS.

Dr. T. Green, of the Standing Committee, reported a paper by Dr. Turnbull, which, on motion, was made the special order after that of Dr. Curwen. He also presented a paper on drugs, etc., by a druggist, which, after some debate, was laid upon the table.

Dr. A. P. Carr, of St. Clair, exhibited a remarkable case of fracture of the skull, with most excellent recovery, and also some pathological specimens and urinary calculi.

The resolution pending at the close of the morning session was then called up and discussed by Drs. Keyser, Davis, and others, and finally the preamble and resolution as amended were adopted.

Dr. Andrew Nebinger, of Philadelphia, of the Special Committee, read the following:—

When the great and good, those who have distinguished themselves as ardent, industrious and successful laborers in the great and diversified fields of science, the departments of humanity and benevolence, pass from this life, it is not only becoming, but a duty, that those who have been their associates and witnessed their achievements should bear testimony to their worth and usefulness, and cause their testimony to be of record. In keeping with this sentiment and duty, the State Medical Society of Pennsylvania now bears testimony that Dr. D. Francis Condie, because of his great erudition, his ability as an author and reviewer, his great familiarity with the literature of his profession, his usefulness as a practitioner of medicine, his strict and uncompromising observance of the ethics of his profession, and the purity of his life, was of those who render themselves attractive by the great usefulness of their labors and by the manner in which they illumine the positions of life in which they are active. As Dr. D. F. Condie was one of the first of those who were delegates to the State Medical Society of Pennsylvania, so was he also one of those whose devotion to the advancement of the interests of the organization, and through it the best interests of suffering humanity, was ever active and efficient; and now be it

*Resolved*, That the State Medical Society of Pennsylvania recognize that in the death of Dr. D. Francis Condie it has lost a most useful, laborious and self-sacrificing member; medicine a most zealous cultivator, and suffering humanity a most efficient friend.

On motion, by a standing vote, the address was adopted and entered on the minutes.

On motion of Dr. Stetler, it was directed that a copy should be transmitted to the family of Dr. Condie.

Dr. John Curwen, of Harrisburg, then read the address on "Mental Disorders."

On motion, a vote of thanks was tendered him, and it was referred to the Committee of Publication.

This matter was then discussed by Drs. Nebinger, Hiram Corson, E. A. Wood and J. L. Atlee.

On motion of Dr. J. L. Atlee, Dr. Curwen was requested to furnish that portion of his address relating to the subject of education to Mr. Wickersham, State Superintendent of Schools, for publication in the *School Journal*, and to the Board of Education of Philadelphia, and that the whole of his address be accepted by the Society, with thanks.

The Committee on Nominations reported the following officers for 1876:—

*President*.—Crawford Irwin, of Blair county.

*Vice Presidents*.—Andrew Nebinger, Philadelphia; A. H. Halberstadt, Schuylkill; R. L. Sibbet, Cumberland; and J. F. Ross, Clarion.

*Corresponding Secretary*.—Horace Y. Evans, Philadelphia.

*Permanent Secretary*.—Wm. B. Atkinson, Philadelphia.

*Recording Secretary*.—James Tyson, Philadelphia.

*Treasurer*.—Benj. Lee, Philadelphia.

*Committee of Publication*.—Wm. B. Atkinson, H. Y. Evans, Benj. Lee, T. M. Drysdale, Jas. Tyson, Albert Fricke, of Philadelphia, and Chas. McIntire, Northampton.

The report also fixed the place of meeting at Philadelphia, and the time the last Wednesday of May, 1876.

The Committee also nominated delegates to the American Medical Association, and to other State medical societies, and censors for each Censorial district.

On motion, the report was unanimously adopted.

The Committee on Unfinished Business reported but one matter, the amendment to the constitution offered last year.

The President then made the following appointments:—

To make the Address in Surgery, Dr. D. Hayes Agnew, Philadelphia.

Address in Obstetrics, Dr. R. Davis, Wilkes-barre.

Address in Medicine, Dr. Jas. Aitken Meigs, Philadelphia.

Address in Hygiene, Dr. Benj. Lee, Philadelphia.

Address in Mental Disorders, Dr. John Curwen, Harrisburg.

Dr. C. F. Deshler, representative from New Jersey, was introduced by Dr. A. H. Halberstadt, and made a humorous address as to what he should report when he went home. His remarks were well received.

The President reappointed as the Standing Committee, Drs. James King, and R. B. Mowry, of Pittsburg, and Trail Green, of Easton.

Dr. Sibbet offered a resolution on distribution of the Code of Ethics, which, after much discussion, was withdrawn.

On motion of Dr. J. L. Atlee, the amendment to the constitution was laid over for another year.

On motion, Dr. Horace De Young, of Mauch Chunk, was invited to a seat with the Society.

The Treasurer presented his report, which was read and referred to auditors, Drs. T. Green, T. Lyon, and E. A. Wood.

Dr. Stetler having offered a resolution to declare Greene Co. dissolved, it being in arrears four years, the President declared it dissolved according to law, without a motion.

Dr. H. Corson, of Conshohocken, offered a resolution that the report presented by Dr. Nebinger to the Society, at Erie, some five years ago, and not printed, be referred to the Committee of Publication. Objected to, and a motion made to lay it on the table. Carried by a vote of 38 to 13.

Dr. L. Turnbull, of Philadelphia, read a paper "On Closure of the Eustachian Tube," from thickening of the mucous membrane, and exhibited a new instrument for remedying it. The Doctor stated that the most frequent morbid condition of the eustachian tube is closure, from thickening of the mucous membrane. This condition is also attended with an excess of viscid secretion clogging its walls. At times there is also abrasion, and even ulceration, the result of small-pox, syphilis, etc. The chief symptoms are impairment of hearing, with noises of various kinds. The causes are ordinary catarrh, influenza, etc.

There are several methods of relief, if it be of a mild character, but should there be much swelling, thickening, etc., he has found his eustachian forceps one of the most valuable instruments, in making applications of stimulating agents, such as nitrate of silver, sulphate of copper, iodine, and carbolic acid, directly to the parts.

He pointed out a new method of determining the condition of the pharyngeal orifice of the tube by the use of the human finger, and described the orifice of the tube, as like the mouth of the os uteri. He also described the opposite morbid condition of the tube, namely, a patency of its orifice, and gave the symptoms, illustrated by a case in which he had caused contraction by the use of stimulating agents and his instrument.

On motion, it was referred to the Committee of Publication. The Permanent Secretary read the following, which, on motion, was received:—

The Committee of Publication respectfully report that they had printed 1200 copies of the volume of Transactions for 1874, at an expense of \$1434.15.

Distributed

To County Medical Societies.....	1041
To Medical and other Journals.....	50
Disposed of by sale.....	1

On hand..... 108

Respectfully submitted

W. M. B. ATKINSON, M. D.

On motion of Dr. Stetler, of Philadelphia, by unanimous consent, the word "majority"

was substituted for the word "three," in section five of article five of the Constitution, defining what shall constitute a quorum of censors.

A discussion arose concerning the modification of a rule adopted in 1853, that a note must be attached to the published proceedings, to the effect that the Society does not endorse by its authority, facts or theories contained in papers read before the Society. No modification was ordered.

Dr. Curwen, of Harrisburg, presented the report of the commission to investigate the condition of the insane criminals, to the Legislature of 1875, with plans of a hospital for their accommodation, and, on motion, it was referred to the Committee of Publication.

Dr. Curwen offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That a committee of eight members of this Society be appointed to prepare a memorial to the Legislature in favor of a hospital for the insane of the counties of Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery and Northampton, and to urge the passage of a law to establish the same.

Motion carried and following committee appointed by the chair: Dr. Curwen, of Harrisburg; P. B. Breinig, of Northampton; W. M. Weidman, of Berks; Gilbert McCoy, of Bucks; H. Corson, of Montgomery; I. Price, of Chester; L. Fussell, of Delaware, and E. G. Martin, of Lehigh.

An animated discussion occurred on the subject of typhoid fever and its causes, as milk, filth, etc., as reported in some of the papers, at the morning session, and was participated in by Drs. Gallagher, Lee, Donnelly, Green, Carpenter, Nebinger and others.

It was stated that, through a mistake of the Nominating Committee, Dr. Horace Y. Evans, who is not personally present at the convention, was chosen Corresponding Secretary, when, by his absence, he is not eligible. Dr. Thos. M. Drysdale was chosen in his place, and Dr. Stetler was substituted for Dr. Evans on the Publishing Committee.

Dr. Allis, whose instrument for the administration of ether was discussed on Wednesday afternoon, was present, and was permitted to explain his instrument and reply to unfavorable comments. A man was introduced, who consented to take ether from the instrument. He was placed in a recumbent position on two tables on the platform, and the instrument placed before his nose. The ether was then poured by degrees into the instrument. In five minutes the man was perfectly rigid and insensible.

On motion of Dr. Turnbull, it was resolved that a committee of three be appointed to report at the next meeting of the society on the best method of administration of anæsthetics.

The President appointed as the committee, Drs. Turnbull, Drysdale and Atkinson.

Dr. Stetler offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:—

WHEREAS, It is ardently desired by the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, that

the regular physicians of the entire State be organized into County Medical Societies, in time to participate in the meeting occurring on the Centennial anniversary of the Independence of the United States, therefore

*Resolved*, That the regular physicians in those counties in Pennsylvania where, as yet, there are no County organizations, be and they are hereby cordially and earnestly solicited to organize forthwith, or as soon as practicable, so as to enable them to unite with us at the meeting above designated.

*Resolved*, That the Censors in whose districts the unorganized counties are located are earnestly requested, at this auspicious period, to institute or urge measures for the consummation of the object so devoutly wished for.

A resolution of thanks to the Committee of Arrangements of the Schuylkill County Medical Society for the faithful performance of duty; to the citizens of Pottsville for their courtesy; to the railroad company for excursion tickets; to the retiring officers, etc., was passed.

The retiring President congratulated the Convention on the perfect harmony that had characterized its sessions.

Dr. Crawford Irwin, of Blair County, the President elect, was called for and introduced. Three cheers were given for the two Presidents.

The president elect, in assuming the chair, said:—

"Twenty-four hours ago, being advised of the wish of friends to place me in the, to me, unusual and difficult position which I now occupy, my first impression was 'an enemy is doing this,' on the principle of the classic saying, 'whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad;' I thought again, this is facetiousness; but the result demonstrates that neither is correct."

After thanking the members for the honor thus conferred, and begging them to aid him in the performance of his duties, he adjourned the Society until the last Wednesday of May, 1876, at 3 P. M.

## EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

### PERISCOPE.

#### The Sulphuret of Carbon in Chronic and Atonic Ulcers.

M. Guillaumet writes in warm terms, in the *Journal de Therapeutique*, on the value of this substance, first introduced by M. Michel in 1867, and since abundantly tried in Dr. Costilhes' wards at the St. Lazare, in cases in which all other remedies have failed. Owing to its nauseous odor, it is applied as rapidly as possible over the surface of the wound, by means of a morsel of charpie, the surface being then covered over with a fine powder of nitrate of bismuth or starch. In recent ulcerations, one or two applications suffice, but five or six applications may be required in old ulcers before any appreciable modification is obtained; but then cicatrization advances rapidly. The following are the conclusions arrived at:—1. Sulphuret of carbon is a very powerful cicatrizer. 2. Its action is rapid and quite local, not producing any of the accidents which attend the prolonged inhalation of its vapors. 3. Its application is accompanied by pain, which is sometimes sharp, proportioned to the susceptibility of the patient, but in most patients of very short duration; it is immediately followed by a period of anæsthesia, which, however, is not constantly present. When it exists, it lasts for several hours, while the painful period does not last more than from twenty to sixty seconds. 4. The sulphuret acts upon wounds of different origin and nature (syphilitic, scrofulous, diphtheritic, etc.), and modifies all of them advan-

tageously. 5. It is a valuable agent in the treatment of all wounds and ulcers which possess the common characters of chronicity and atony.

### REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTICES.

#### NOTES ON CURRENT MEDICAL LITERATURE.

—The *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* gives the number for June 17th to Centennial purposes. Among other things, it contains a copperplate portrait of Gen. Joseph Warren, M. D., with quotations from his *Medical Day-book*, and an original Sonnet by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

—Among the most readable of summer books will be a volume by Albert Rhodes, well known to the readers of *Scribner*, and the *Gazette*, entitled "The French at Home." The author has had rare opportunities for observation, as diplomate and man of letters. Some thirty characteristic illustrations will add to the attractiveness of the book. Dodd & Mead will be the publishers. A new story, by Edward Garrett, the popular author of "Occupations of a Retired Life," etc., is promised by the same house, in June.

THE  
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**THE HOME TREATMENT OF THE SICK POOR.**

A sensitive and conscientious physician is often troubled by an uncertainty as to how far he shall give his time and skill to charity cases. His first duty is to those of his own household; he must provide for their wants, and attend diligently to the financial aspects of his business to do so. Then he owes a debt to society, and still more to his profession, not to attend gratuitously, nor for insignificant fees, those who are able to pay.

On the other hand, it savors of cruelty to refuse to visit the sick who need his aid, no matter how poor they are; in fact, the poorer they are, the crueler it is to pass them by.

In a broader way these same questions occur to the sanitary authorities of large cities. To furnish gratuitous medical attendance and medicines *ad libitum* would be a foolish prodigality, and hurtful to both givers and receivers. The hospitals, it is true, cannot accommodate many who need assistance; and many cases

are better as out-patients than in the wards. But in this respect the hospitals do not fully supply the want. A certain number of cases, especially chronic cases, could be more cheaply and equally efficiently treated at their own homes.

This need has made itself felt in Paris, and to meet it a society has been formed, called the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*.

A certain number of medical men are appointed to the Bureau de Bienfaisance of each arrondissement or district. Their duty has hitherto been confined to affording medical aid, or in surgical cases, to performing only the minor operations at the residence of the patients, the more serious cases being sent to the hospital.

Just now an effort is making to extend the operations of this society to include the gratuitous attention of indigent invalids of all kinds, at their own homes. The reasons assigned are, that for very many diseases the large public institutions are wholly disqualified.

One of the principal charges brought against hospitals is the great mortality that takes place in them, and the causes are explained thus:—Purulent infection and erysipelas are almost constantly present, and the microscope has shown that the walls and curtains are loaded with miasmata, against which the surgeon is powerless. It is stated that so long as the Necker Hospital was the smallest of the Paris hospitals, the mortality after operations was very small, but since it has been enlarged, it has rivaled the other hospitals in lethality. The Lariboisière Hospital, which is looked upon as a model of its kind, constructed as it is on the strictest principles of hygiene, does not yield to its seniors in the number of deaths after great operations. The scrupulous cleanliness and the luxurious way in which some of the hospitals have been gotten up and maintained, seem to offer no guaranty against infection. The wards exhale an odor which is *sui generis* and indelible, and is compared to the odor emanating from dead bodies; and the buildings



are so impregnated with it, that even the isolation of patients in separate rooms under the same roof has no effect in reducing the risks of infection. There is a saying that has become vulgar, that no operation of trephining has ever proved successful at the Hôtel-Dieu. A successful case of the Cæsarean operation, or even of ovariectomy, has never been heard of in the Paris hospitals; and as regards the latter operation, the Assistance Publique, at the instigation of some of the hospital surgeons, having made arrangements to have the operation performed in the country, it was attended with great success. This wholesale condemnation may be summed up thus:—Hospitals are, for capital operations, what maternities are for lying-in women—a sepulchre, a necropolis; and some author has recently stated that it were better for a woman to be confined in the quarries than in a maternity-hospital. The same remark may be applied to patients operated on.

It is asserted by the English writers that this state of things does not exist on their side of the channel. But we all know that large lying-in hospitals, and especially that children's hospitals, in cities, exhibit very ugly bills of mortality. Perhaps this question of hospitalism has never been closely enough considered; and that this direction of charity here suggested is a good substitute for large wards in most, as it certainly is in some diseases.

Careful regulations should be made that it should not be abused, but they are quite feasible and could be depended upon.

## NEWS AND MISCELLANY.

### An Unfortunate Lady.

A writer in an English cotemporary says:—The medical history of Jeanne D'Albrecht, Queen of Navarre, is worthy of transcription. Some time married before falling pregnant, her first child was taken care of by an infirm old lady, who shut all the doors, closed every window; so the child, aged eighteen months, died of atrophy when the mother was again pregnant. The next infant, dropped down marble steps by a careless nurse, lived but

four days after. During her third pregnancy, in camp, her husband, in joke, leveled, as he thought, an unloaded gun at her, and pulled the trigger, the bullet whizzing terribly close. Her father, who did not want a peevish girl or driveling boy, promised rank, power, anything, for the child, provided, during labor, the mother sang merry Gascon ballads, which she did, song after song, without flinching, during prolonged hours of agony. This time, instead of an old woman, a healthy peasant girl took the infant from a palatial castle to her humble cottage, where, as bad luck would have it, this and eight successive nurses sickened of typhus, then endemic. The next two children were very weakly. When her husband was shot in the left shoulder, the bullet beyond extraction, the revelry of the sick-room conducted to fever, delirium, and death. When her daughter had pleurisy, requiring free blood-letting, it was supposed that the worn-out, kind, watchful mother then contracted phthisis; and at the age of forty-four this pure, angelic, long-suffering lady gladly laid down her wearied head to rest.

### Apsithuria.

Dr. J. Solis Cohen has informed us that the first case mentioned in his article on *apsithuria*, published in our columns for May 1st, 1875, may now be favorably reported. Taking advantage of the improved general condition of the patient, Dr. Cohen resumed electric treatment by external applications of the interrupted battery current of twenty cells, and eventually succeeded in restoring the voice. The weak voice was afterwards strengthened by systematic vocal exercises, and at the time of the report was perfectly satisfactory for conversational purposes.

### Personal.

—A monument to Morgagni was erected on the 27th of May, in his native Forlì, the Town Council of which invited to the ceremony all the medico-chirurgical Academies and Faculties of Italy and the principal medical bodies of other countries. The Town Councils of Padua and Bologna, cities which owe so much of their renown to Morgagni, also assisted; while the deputation of National History of the Emilia held a congress in Forlì.

—According to a late number of the *Swiss Chronicle*, Sir Henry Thompson is promoting a 'Cremation Society,' which will arrange for the incineration of remains in the most approved manner, and will erect, at a cost of about £2500, a suitable building in which to hold religious services."

—Dr. T. P. Rogers, an eminent medical practitioner, for many years professor in the University of Louisville, died in that city, of cancer of the stomach.



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